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June 5, 2006

The Honorable Donald Rumsfeld
Secretary of Defense
The Pentagon
Washington, D.C. 20301

Dear Secretary Rumsfeld:

I am writing in support of a recent recommendation by Secretary of the Army Francis J. Harvey that Master Sergeant Woodrow W. Keeble be awarded the Medal of Honor.

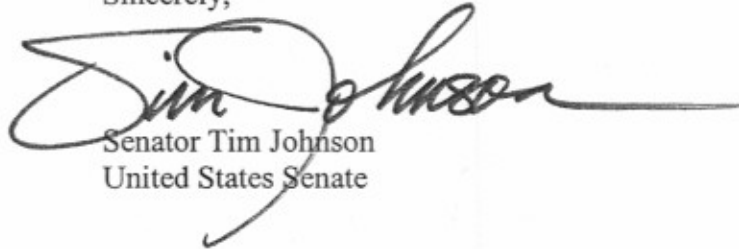
Master Sergeant Keeble was a veteran of both World War II and the Korean War. The recommendation for the Medal of Honor is based on his actions near Kumsong, North Korea in October 1951. After many days of fighting in the bitter cold, and though he was wounded, Master Sergeant Keeble single-handedly took out three enemy machine-gun emplacements. At the time, his unit submitted the paperwork recommending him for the Medal of Honor; however, this paperwork was lost on two occasions and Master Sergeant Keeble never got the consideration for which he was due.

I became aware of this case in 2002, and contacted the Secretary of the Army asking him to waive the statute of limitations and reconsider Master Sergeant Keeble's case based on the evidence that the original recommendation had been lost. After working closely with the Army over the past four years, I was pleased to receive a letter dated May 31, 2006 from Secretary Francis in which he stated he has recommended Master Sergeant Keeble be posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor. It is my understanding that this recommendation is now awaiting your approval. For the sake of Master Sergeant Keeble's family, it is my hope that you will expedite the consideration and approval of this recommendation.

Like so many veterans, Master Sergeant Keeble did not return home thinking about medals or decorations. Instead, he came back to the United States, raised his family, and led a productive life until his death in 1982. If not for the tireless efforts of his family and friends, the men in his unit, and the Sisseton Wahpeton Sioux Tribe, his remarkable story may have been lost forever. Their decades-long efforts have gotten us to the point where Master Sergeant Keeble can finally receive the recognition he did not seek, but clearly deserves.

I appreciate your attention to this matter, and please do not hesitate to contact me if I can provide any further information. I look forward to your reply.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tim Johnson", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Senator Tim Johnson
United States Senate